



Sherburne

National Wildlife Refuge

Summary

Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment

July 2005



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United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge
17076 293rd Avenue
Zimmerman, MN 55398

IN REPLY REFER TO:

July 12, 2005

Dear Reader:

We are pleased to provide you this Executive Summary of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge. This summary is being mailed to citizens and organizations who have expressed an interest in the Plan.

The Draft Plan is an important step in the planning process that began in 2001. The process will end later this year when a final decision is made on which alternative, or modified alternative, will become the Final CCP.

The CCP will guide management for the next 15 years and help the Refuge meet its original purpose and contribute to the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Plan will provide both broad and specific policy on various issues; set a vision, goals, and measurable objectives; and outline strategies for reaching those objectives.

Established by Congress in 1965, the Refuge is a truly special place worth conserving through thoughtful management and planning. We invite you to comment on the Plan and look forward to continuing the dialogue on the future of the Refuge, and thank you for your continued interest in keeping this Refuge a special place for wildlife and people.

Sincerely

Anne Sittauer
Refuge Manager



Oak savanna on Sherburne NWR. USFWS

Introduction

Imagine a place where migrating birds flock to rest and build energy on their flights north and south. Imagine a natural setting nearly 50 square miles in size next door to 3 million people. Imagine a place discovered anew by black bears and gray wolves after a long absence. Now, imagine a place where wildlife comes first, but the need for people to interact with nature is not forgotten. Perhaps the place you have imagined is the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge; a wild remnant at the meeting of the western prairies and the northern woods.

Sandhill Cranes nest and roost in numbers here, Bald Eagles sit on bulky nests, and tall wading birds stand poised at the edge of the water waiting for the glint of an unlucky fish. Grassland birds have a home here, beavers build their lodges, and foxes den close to their human neighbors.

The Refuge is truly a special place appreciated by many people. However, the nature of the surrounding countryside is changing as rural farms give way to suburban homes and businesses. Can wildlife and natural things be sustained as the Refuge becomes more isolated in a developed landscape? Can we manage Refuge lands to stimulate the best fish and wildlife habitat possible? What is the balance between the needs of wildlife and the increasing number of people who will discover this wild place? The comprehensive conservation planning process explores these questions with involvement by neighbors, outdoor sports enthusiasts, local communities, non-government organizations, state wildlife agencies

and other federal agencies. Ultimately, a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) will answer them.

Vital Statistics

The 30,700-acre Refuge was established in 1965 at the urging of local conservationists and sportsmen interested in restoring the wildlife values of the St. Francis River Basin, which had been altered by a series of drainage ditches and agricultural production. The land was purchased under the authority of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 and is now part of the National Wildlife Refuge System (Figure 1).

With evolving science and social priorities, the Refuge has seen many changes in management techniques and emphasis during the past 40 years. However, the greatest changes may be those happening outside its boundary. According to the 2000 Census, Sherburne County is the second most rapidly developing county in the State of Minnesota, recording a growth of 54 percent from 1990 to 2000. It has also been included in the newly expanded nine-county metropolitan area of the Twin Cities. Rapid population growth is projected to continue in the region and will greatly influence the future of the Refuge and its programs.

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge is the largest public land holding in Sherburne County.



Hoary vervain.
USFWS

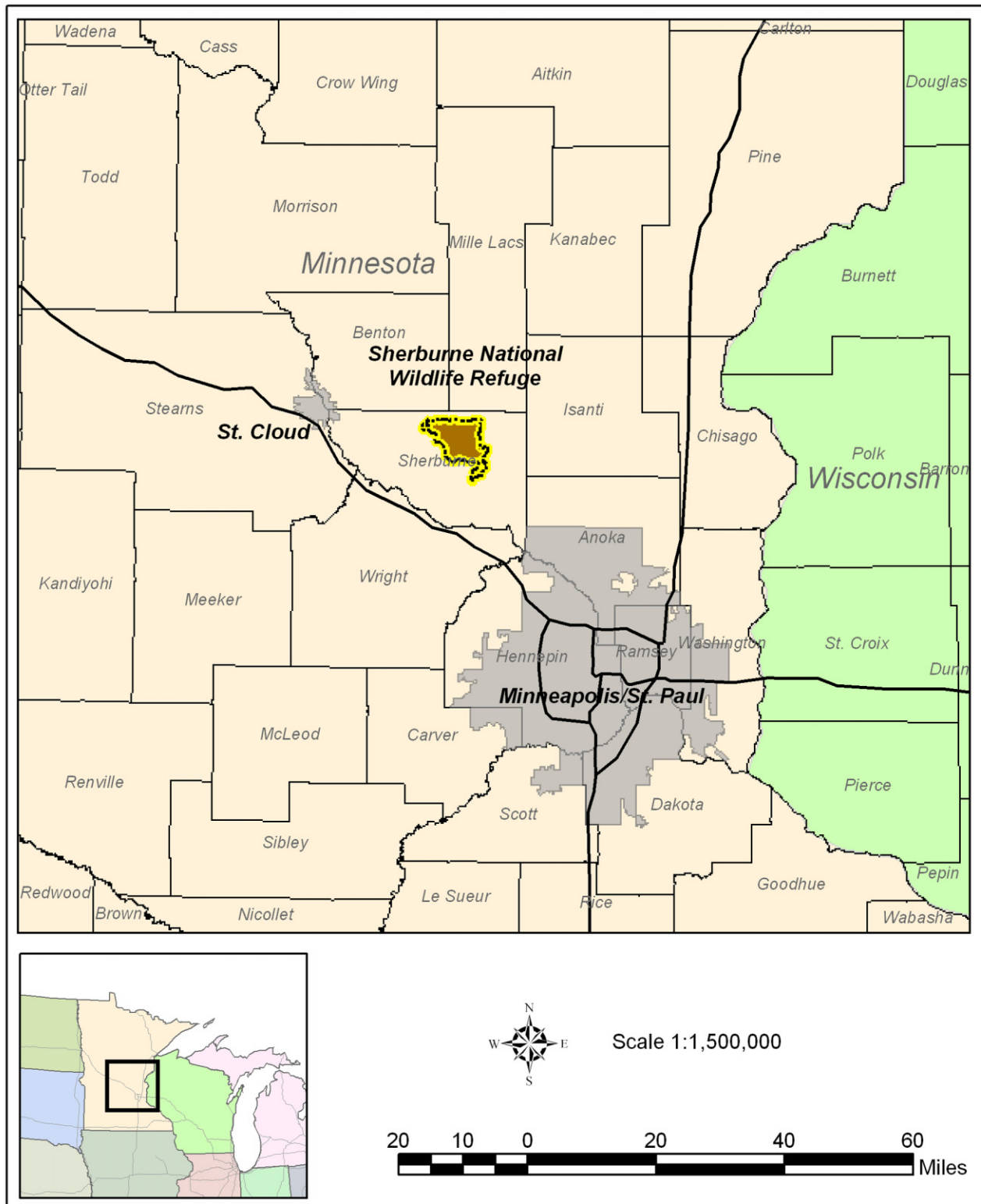
Most of the Refuge is located within the St. Francis River Watershed, which extends northward into Benton County. The St. Francis River begins about 18 miles from where it enters the northwest corner of the Refuge. After traveling through the Refuge, the St. Francis River drains into the Elk River, which in turn drains into the Mississippi River at the City of Elk River, Minnesota. A small

portion of the Refuge lies within the Snake River Watershed.

The Refuge Environment

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge is located in the Mississippi Headwaters/Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Figure 1: Location of Sherburne NWR

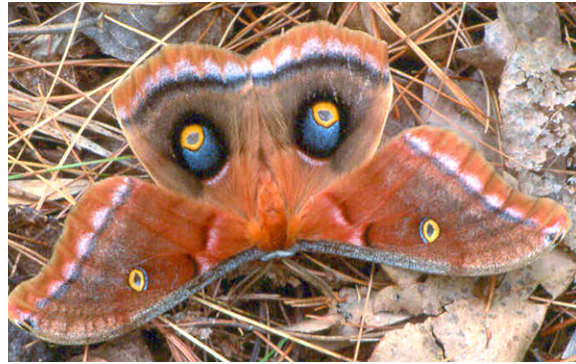


This ecosystem is primarily located in Minnesota and North Dakota with small sections extending into Wisconsin and Iowa.

Historically, this portion of North America was subject to periodic glaciation and consequently, glacial meltwaters were instrumental in forming the five major river systems located or partly located within this ecosystem. These river systems are the Mississippi River, St. Croix River, Red River, Missouri River, and the Minnesota River. Likewise, glacial moraines and other deposits resulted in a myriad of lakes and wetlands that are common throughout this area. Significant variation in the topography and soils of the area attest to its dynamic glacial history.

The three major ecological communities within this ecosystem are the tallgrass prairie, the northern boreal forest, and the eastern deciduous forest. Vegetation common to the tallgrass prairie includes big bluestem, little bluestem, Indian grass, sideoats grama, and switch grass. Native prairie also supports numerous ecologically important forbs such as prairie coneflower, purple prairie clover, and blazing star. The northern boreal forest is primarily comprised of a variety of coniferous species such as jack pine, balsam fir, and spruce. Common tree species in the eastern deciduous forest include maple, basswood, red oak, white oak, and ash. Current land uses range from tourism and timber industries in the northern forests to intensive agriculture in the historic tallgrass prairie. Oak savanna and tallgrass prairie are by far the most threatened landscapes in the Midwest, with more than 99 percent having been converted for agricultural or residential purposes.

Due to its ecological and vegetative diversity, this ecosystem supports at least 121 species of neotropical migrants and other migratory birds. It provides breeding and migration habitat for significant populations of waterfowl plus a variety of other water birds. The ecosystem supports several species of candidate and federally-listed threatened and endangered species including the Bald Eagle, Piping Plover, Higgins eye pearly mussel, Karner blue butterfly, prairie bush clover, Leedy's roseroot, dwarf trout lily, and the western prairie fringed orchid. The increasingly rare paddlefish and lake sturgeon are also found in portions of this ecosystem.



Antheraea polyphemus. USFWS

Who We Are and What We Do

The Refuge is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), the primary federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the nation's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. The Service oversees the enforcement of federal wildlife laws, management and protection of migratory bird populations, restoration of nationally significant fisheries, administration of the Endangered Species Act, and the restoration of wildlife habitat such as wetlands.

The Service also manages the National Wildlife Refuge System, which was founded in 1903 when President Theodore Roosevelt designated Pelican Island in Florida as a sanctuary for Brown Pelicans. Today, the System is a network of more than 540 refuges covering more than 93 million acres of public lands and waters. Most of these lands (82 percent) are in Alaska, with approximately 16 million acres located in the lower 48 states and several island territories. The National Wildlife Refuge System is the world's largest collection of lands specifically managed for fish and wildlife. Overall, it provides habitat for more than 5,000 species of birds, mammals, fish, and insects. As a result of international treaties for migratory bird conservation as well as other legislation, such as the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929, many refuges have been established to conserve migratory waterfowl and their migratory flyways from their northern nesting grounds to southern wintering areas. Refuges also play a vital role in preserving endangered and threatened species. Among the most notable is Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas, which provides winter habitat for the Whooping Crane. Likewise, the

Florida Panther Refuge protects one of the nation's most endangered predators.

Refuges also provide unique opportunities for people. They are places where people can enjoy wildlife-dependent recreation such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and environmental interpretation. Many refuges have visitor centers, wildlife trails, automobile tours, and environmental education programs. Nationwide, more than 39 million people visited national wildlife refuges in 2003.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 established several important mandates aimed at making the management of national wildlife refuges more cohesive. The preparation of a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) is one of those mandates. The legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to ensure that the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System and purposes of the individual refuges are carried out. It also requires the Secretary to maintain the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Refuge Vision

The following vision statement was developed early in the CCP process. The vision paints a picture of how Sherburne NWR could look 100 years in the future.

“In a region where citizens treasure natural areas managed by national, state, and local governments, the Refuge is celebrated for its wildlife and the extraordinary opportunities it provides for visitors. The Refuge conserves a diverse mosaic of restored, quality, native Anoka Sandplain communities and protected cultural resources. The upland habitats are dynamic, ranging from grasslands to oak savanna to forest. These are interspersed with a variety of wetland and riverine habitats ranging from sedge meadow to deep water marsh. The Refuge’s hydrologic regime includes a functional St. Francis River riparian system, with clean water flowing into and out of the Refuge. Wildlife and habitat are in balance, and management reflects an adaptive response to climatic change and other changing conditions, using pre-European settlement vegetation as a guide.



Sherburne NWR serves as an outdoor classroom for many area students.

Visitors have quality experiences that provide personal and societal benefits, including heightened awareness and support of a strong conservation ethic. Refuge staff, visitors, and the community understand and value the cultural history of the area. Visitor use and management activities are consistent with the maintenance of sustainable populations of wildlife and their associated habitats. The Refuge is part of the community and the community claims ownership of, actively supports, and advocates for the Refuge mission, purpose, and programs. The surrounding lands are recognized as valuable to the integrity of the Refuge by providing green corridors and habitat continuity to adjacent natural areas.”

Planning Process

Public involvement is a key element of comprehensive conservation planning, and throughout this planning process we strive to provide as many opportunities for public participation as possible. A Notice of Intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan for Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge was published in the Federal Register May 4, 2001. Subsequently, articles in local newspapers notified citizens and a web page was developed. In addition, over 5,000 letters were sent to surrounding residents inviting them to participate. Invitees and participants included members of the public, Chippewa and Dakota Tribes, Sherburne NWR Friends Group, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, private conservation groups (NGOs), university faculty and government scientists. The planning effort benefited from the creative involvement of the

public, tribal, state, university and federal participants.

The CCP planning process began in November 2000 with a team comprised of Refuge staff, regional and Washington Office planners, representatives of regional office programs, and biologists from the U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division. The team agreed to proceed through a combination of expert technical groups and workshops open to the public and facilitated by Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG), which is a Species Survival Committee (SSC) member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Three technical groups (upland, wetland, and public use) met throughout the year. Concurrently, four CBSG workshops were held. These workshops were designed to incorporate the technical group findings and the public meetings and to consolidate work to produce a mission statement, vision statement, and goals and draft objectives for the environmental assessment and comprehensive conservation plan.

The Draft CCP incorporates the results of these meetings and workshops. In addition to the general public, we invited individuals from a diversity of groups and institutions.

Opportunity to participate in the planning process continues with the release of the Draft CCP and Environmental Assessment. We hope that you will review this summary of the Draft CCP and, if you are interested, the full CCP and Environmental Assessment. Your comments on the Refuge management direction outlined here will help us



The Old School House is a primary location for environmental education at Sherburne NWR. USFWS

draft a final plan that is both visionary and practical. Information on where to direct comments and how to obtain a copy of the full document are provided on page 12.

Issues and Critical Needs

The following is a consolidated list of issues that were identified during many public meetings and technical group sessions during the course of the planning process. The Planning Team organized all of the issues/concerns/opportunities received during the public scoping process into six major categories. Many of the goals and strategies presented in the CCP relate to one or more of the issue categories. The categories include: Wildlife, Endangered and Threatened Species, Upland Management, Wetland Management, Landscape and Wildlife-dependent Recreation. The following is a sampling of the types of issues discussed prior to developing the Draft CCP.

Wildlife

- How can we expand the focus of refuge management to ecosystem restoration without losing the original mission as outlined in the enabling legislation? When the Refuge began, management for “migratory birds” focused on waterfowl, now the focus has expanded to all migratory birds and endangered and threatened species.
- Is the Refuge waterfowl monitoring program adequate?
- Do we need to monitor human disturbance of wildlife on the Refuge?

Endangered and Threatened Species

- How can we manage Refuge land to preserve and restore threatened and endangered species, rare and declining species, and address regional priority species?
- Should artificial nesting platforms be provided for Bald Eagles to supplement loss of trees?
- Under what circumstances should we reintroduce rare, native species to the Refuge?

Upland Management

- How do we deal with invasive species, both exotic and native, that are damaging the natural ecological balance of Refuge habitats?
- Should we return the uplands to pre-1850’s habitat quality?

Wetland Management

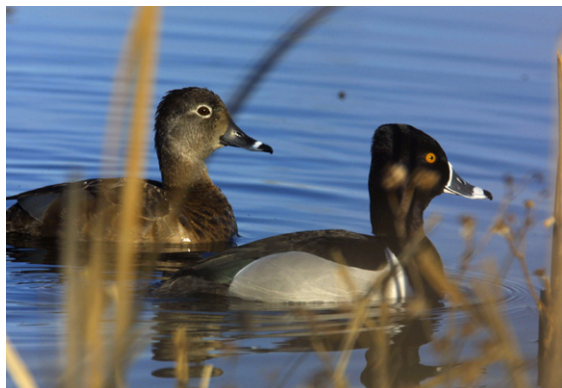
- Should the Refuge maintain water impoundments given the goal of restoration to pre-1800's conditions?
- What is the impact of the impoundments on the historic flooding regime? Have they inadvertently caused a decline in the quality of natural river bottom wetlands?
- Is the quality of the water entering the Refuge degraded due to changing land use in surrounding areas?

Landscape

- How to deal with the fact that Sherburne NWR will be an island and must become its own buffer. Specifically, management of healthy wildlife populations while at the same time dealing with increasing expectations and pressures from the public.
- Urbanization/adjacent land use places constraints on management tools and movement of wildlife and plants and their gene flow.

Wildlife-dependent Recreation

- Refuge lacks appropriate visitor service infrastructure to accommodate large groups for environmental education purposes.
- Dealing with conflicted desires i.e., some people want more recreational use while others want less use of the Refuge.
- Do we have adequate facilities for wildlife viewing such as observation decks, trails and auto tour routes?
- Safety among hunters and other users is perceived as a real or potential problem.



Ring-necked Ducks. Gary Moss

Between 800 and 1000 hunters participate on the opening day of the firearms deer season.

- Do we need to expand access for fishing, especially for anglers with disabilities?

Refuge Goals

The following goals for the Refuge were developed based on the authorized purpose for the Refuge and public input.

Goal 1: Upland Anoka Sandplain habitats approximate mid-1800s conditions, contributing to the preservation of these declining ecotypes and their associated Service priority species.

Goal 2: A diverse mosaic of riverine and wetland habitats meets the needs of Service priority riparian and other wetland dependent species.

Goal 3: A balanced diversity of native migratory birds and other native wildlife reflects an emphasis on Service priority species appropriate to Refuge habitats.

Goal 4: A complex of natural areas, corridors, and watershed conservation practices in the surrounding landscape complements Refuge habitat and wildlife goals.

Goal 5: Visitors enjoy wildlife dependent opportunities that further an appreciation of Refuge wildlife and habitats.

Goal 6: Visitors and local citizens demonstrate a strong conservation ethic that leads to support of the Refuge, conservation of the surrounding landscape, and global environmental awareness.

Goal 7: The cultural resources and cultural history of the Refuge are valued and preserved, and connect Refuge staff, visitors, and the community to the area's past

Alternatives Considered

Based on the issues and the vision statement developed during the scoping process, the Planning Team developed five alternative management scenarios that could be used at Sherburne NWR. These alternatives and the consequences of adopting each are fully presented in the Draft Environmental Assessment and a brief description of each is presented here.

Alternative 4: Pre-European Settlement Processes and Habitat in Context of Providing Migratory Waterbird Habitat, is the preferred alternative and was the basis for further analysis in the Draft CCP. Each of the alternatives is designed to fit within the scope of operations of similar-sized refuges in the Midwest. The alternatives were formulated under the assumption that staffing and budgets would grow slowly throughout the life of the CCP.

Alternative 1: Current Management Through Landscape Plan (No Action)

As part of the comprehensive conservation planning process, a Draft Environmental Assessment has been prepared. The Council of Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act require that all environmental assessments include the alternative of taking no action or, in other words, continuing on the present course.

Current management is focused on upland habitats to approximate 1850s conditions based on the Refuge Landscape Plan as a guiding document. Wetlands are actively managed to benefit migratory birds. The Landscape Plan also allows for a re-evaluation and possible removal of the impoundment water control as the structures deteriorate. Interpretive and environmental education programs compare the biology of natural landscapes to managed systems and the native cultural history and the transition to European settlement. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and wildlife photography are provided at levels consistent with existing plans and guidance. Cultural resources of the Refuge are valued, interpreted and preserved. Off-Refuge restoration programs are focused on the objectives of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Alternative 2: Pre-settlement (1800-1850) Ecological Processes

Refuge management will approximate ecological processes that promoted the native Anoka Sandplain communities present prior to European settlement, emphasizing the restoration of natural hydrological and fire regimes. Vegetative communities and wildlife diversity will then be expected to resemble pre-settlement conditions. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and wildlife photography will give visitors a personal experience with wildlife and native habitats. Environmental interpretation and education programs will emphasize the role of



Oak savanna on Sherburne NWR. USFWS

ecological processes in creating natural pre-European settlement habitats and cultural history. Off-Refuge outreach, private lands, and partnership activity will emphasize natural processes, corridors, and restoration. Cultural resources of the Refuge will be valued, interpreted and preserved.

Alternative 3: Enhanced off-Refuge Coordination with Current on-Refuge Management Direction

This alternative recognizes that the Refuge is part of a larger and rapidly changing landscape. The current management direction will be maintained on the Refuge but new programs and staff will focus on off-Refuge land conservation efforts. This alternative will emphasize the pursuit of a strong land conservation ethic through partnerships with local communities, conservation groups, and government organizations. Outreach will focus on native habitat restoration and conservation to form ecologically functioning connections to and from the Refuge. Restoration of native vegetation and wetlands on the Refuge will be used as demonstration areas. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and wildlife photography will give visitors a personal experience with wildlife and native habitats. Environmental interpretation and education programs on and off the Refuge will compare the biology of managed systems to the biology of natural landscapes and the culture history of pre-European settlement with European settlement. Cultural resources of the Refuge and the watershed will be valued, interpreted and preserved.

Alternative 4: Pre-European Settlement Processes and Habitat in Context of Providing Migratory Waterbird Habitat (Preferred Alternative)

Refuge management will maintain a portion of the current water impoundment system to provide migratory habitat for water birds. This would create a diversity of wetland types to support water-dependent species. Vegetation communities and hydrology on the remainder of the Refuge would approximate conditions typical of the Anoka Sandplain in the mid-1800s. Management of upland habitats will focus on maintaining and restoring these plant communities through the use of ecological processes that shaped these communities prior to European settlement. Environmental interpretation and education programs on and off-Refuge will compare the biology of managed systems to that of natural landscapes and the cultural history of pre-European settlement to post-European settlement. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and wildlife photography will give visitors a personal experience with wildlife and native habitats. Off-Refuge outreach, private lands, and partnership activity will emphasize natural processes, and native habitat restoration and conservation to form ecologically functioning connections to and from the Refuge. Cultural resources of the Refuge will be valued, interpreted and preserved.

Alternative 5: Focused Management for Priority Wetland and Grassland Birds

The focus of this alternative will be management for the migration and production of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 3 priority wetland and grassland birds. Wetland management for priority bird species will include a mixture of high water for emergent vegetation control and drawdowns that vary spatially and temporally to favor the seasonal occurrence of various bird groups. The current impoundment system will be maintained and managed to meet the objectives of priority bird species. Where possible, water management will mimic natural processes to provide for a diverse wetland bird community. Upland management will emphasize the more open end of the prairie-oak savanna continuum to create large blocks of prairie to benefit the priority grassland birds. Environmental interpretation and education programs on and off the Refuge will focus on the importance of managing for Service priority wetland and grassland birds and their habitats. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife



Red-wing Blackbird. USFWS

observation, and wildlife photography give visitors a personal experience with wildlife and native habitats. Outreach activities will focus on habitat restoration and conservation with an emphasis on grasslands and wetlands, encouraging contiguous grassland habitat. Cultural resources of the Refuge will be valued, interpreted and preserved.

Future Management Direction

Managing Habitat for Wildlife

In the past, management of Sherburne NWR has followed a mixed strategy. Currently, the uplands of Sherburne NWR are a mosaic of habitats forming many different communities from oak savanna to grasslands and big woods to shrub. Sherburne NWR has 23 restored wetlands, or impoundments, where the water level can be manipulated. Water management by controlled fluctuations creates a variety of habitats to provide for a diversity of wildlife requirements. Water level management is the primary technique used to maintain the diversity and productivity of Refuge impoundments. Future management will focus on oak savanna in the upland (Alternative 4 in the EA). The result will be one of the largest oak savanna restorations in the Midwest. Oak savanna is recognized as globally endangered and this large scale restoration effort will take many years beyond the 15 year planning horizon of the CCP. The wetlands of Sherburne NWR will be managed to maximize their productivity for water birds in migration. This means that many of the wetlands will be drawn down asynchronously on a 4- to 5-year cycle to simulate semipermanent wetlands. This wetland type creates a dynamic cycling of water and nutrients and provides a richest resource for all waterbirds.

The specifics of how this shift in management will be conducted is outlined in the objectives presented in the full CCP document. The lack of knowledge regarding the hydrologic regime on the Refuge is a major concern for Refuge staff and regional planners preparing the comprehensive conservation plan. To address this concern, a hydrologic study is proposed with the understanding that the information gained may require refining and revising planned management actions.



Wildlife viewing on Sherburne NWR. USFWS

Improving Visitor Services

A new visitor center and headquarters facility will be designed to provide optimal educational opportunities for teaching the visiting public and school groups about Refuge wildlife and habitat management. The visitor's education begins on the short walk from the parking area to the building, which leads them through native habitats, preparing them visually for the messages they will receive inside.

The lobby area, immediately inside the front doors, will hold a reception desk, brochure display area, public restrooms, and a video alcove where up to ten people can view an orientation film on the Refuge. The Friends of Sherburne will have a retail area close to the reception desk where educational materials will be available.



Blanding's Turtle. USFWS

An exhibit hall will provide space for a variety of interactive educational displays that will inform the visitor about Refuge habitat, habitat management activities, and the wildlife using the Refuge. Large windows will provide a

view of School House Pool and wildlife using the Pool. A meeting room that can also be used as a classroom will provide seating for a minimum of 100 people.

Visitor support facilities will include two staff offices, a volunteer staging area with lockers, kitchenette and workroom. All necessary mechanical, janitorial, and storage rooms will be included.

Outside the visitor center a modest trail system will provide an opportunity for short-stay visitors and school groups to experience oak savanna, prairie opening and wetland habitats. Interpretive signs providing habitat and wildlife messages, an observation deck for wildlife viewing, and a wetland boardwalk to facilitate wetland studies, will be provided.

In addition to the proposed new visitor center, improvements to visitor services will be accomplished as environmental education and interpretation programming continues to grow. Additional information kiosks and interpretive panels of current facilities are possible. Partnerships with local schools, communities and businesses will also facilitate improved programming. To reduce potential conflicts among and between recreational user groups, management methods such as time zoning, hunt quotas, and recreational carrying capacities may be employed. These management activities will lead to improved visitor services.

Plan Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Draft CCP outlines an ambitious course of action for the future management of Sherburne NWR. Pursuing and ultimately achieving goals set out in the CCP will require considerable staff and partnership commitment. Throughout the life of the CCP we will monitor our progress on achieving the goals, objectives and strategies it establishes. On a periodic basis, the Service will evaluate the Refuge activities in light of the CCP. Additional “step-down” management plans will also be necessary to provide more details on Refuge programs such as visitor services, hunting, habitat management, water management and law enforcement.

Where to Get the Full Draft CCP and EA

Copies of the Draft CCP and EA are available for review at a variety of locations:

- On the Web at: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/sherburne/index.html>
- At libraries in Zimmerman, Princeton, Elk River, Big Lake and Becker.
- At Refuge Headquarters, which is located at 17076–293rd Avenue, Zimmerman, MN 55398.

For assistance in locating a copy, please call the Refuge at 763/389-3323.

Open House Scheduled

You are invited to attend an open house to discuss the Sherburne NWR Draft CCP on Wednesday, August 17, 2005. The open house will be held at the Old School House, which is located on Sherburne County Road 9, 5.5 miles west of Highway 169 or 2 miles east of County Road 5.



Indigo Bunting. USFWS

Tell Us What You Think

We invite your review of the Draft CCP and Environmental Assessment and tell us what you think. Your comments on the Draft CCP will help us write a Final CCP that is both visionary and practical.

Written comments are also welcome and should be addressed to:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Attn: CCP Comment
BHW Federal Building, Room 530
1 Federal Drive
Ft. Snelling, MN 55111

You may also send comments through the website for this planning project at:
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/sherburne/index.html>.

Comments Needed by September 2, 2005

We welcome comments at any time. However, to consider your comment as we prepare the final CCP and Environmental Assessment, we need to receive it by September 2, 2005.